



CHATHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Medway Chronicle

'Keeping Medway's History Alive'



On her arrival Princess Elizabeth inspects, with the C-in-C., The Nore, the guard of honour drawn up outside the Ward Room, R.N. Barracks, Chatham.

1950 – 2020 The Society's Seventieth Anniversary Issue
Luton • Holcombe • 2025 City of Culture bid

CHATHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY meets at St Stephen's Church, Maidstone Road, Chatham, ME4 6JE on the second Wednesday of each month except January and August.

Doors open at 7:15pm and the meeting starts at 7:30pm.

News and information about Chatham Historical Society is available on the website:
www.chathamhistoricalsoc.btck.co.uk

Officers of the committee

President	Vacancy
Chairman	Len Feist
Hon Secretary	Catharina Clement
Hon Treasurer	Barry Meade

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The Editor welcomes articles for inclusion in future issues of the Medway Chronicle.
Please submit text and images in electronic form by email to
chatham.historicalsoc@gmail.com or on paper to the editor at any of the society's meetings. (The editor prefers email.)

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Front cover: Princess Elizabeth in Chatham to unveil the St George's Church war memorial in the dockyard on 3 November 1950.

2020 - Our 70th Anniversary

Our society celebrates its 70th anniversary this year and despite being unable to meet at present due to Covid-19 we publish this issue of the Medway Chronicle to mark the occasion.

The Society 1950-1970

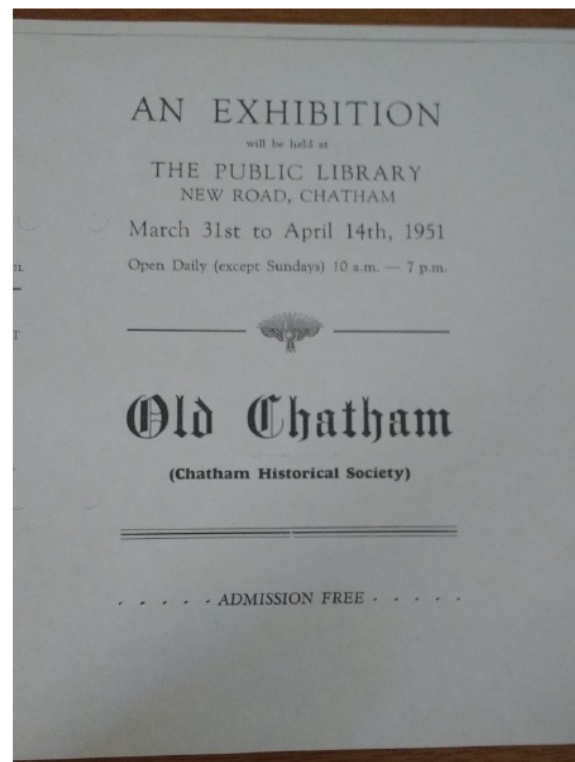
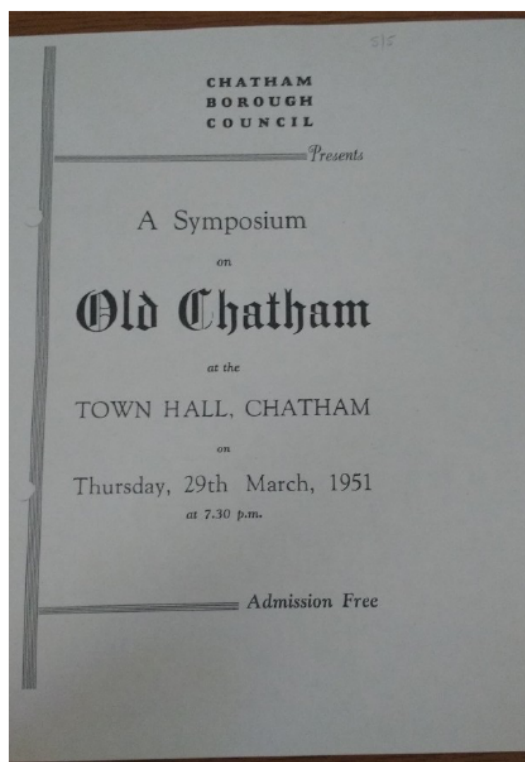
On the 10th October 1949 Councillor Presnail suggested the idea of forming a historical society to ‘study the Medway Towns and immediate surrounding district’. By February 1950 a draft constitution had been proposed and 35 people had expressed an interest in joining such a society. The inaugural meeting of the Chatham & District Historical Society took place on 23rd March 1950 at the Public Library on the New Road, Chatham. It was decided that the society would collate material from the Medway Towns (something that is still very prominent today), conduct indoor and outdoor activities, and set the subscription at 2s 6d per annum.



Chatham Public Library, New Road -
Image courtesy of Medway Archives Centre

The first Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on 27th April 1950 chaired by A J V Richardson followed by a talk given by Mr W T Killen on 'The Historical Approach to the Study of Local History'. He advised speakers should read on general British history and place their local talks in context. Killen also encouraged using the County Archives and visiting places of interest. An announcement was made that the next speaker would be S K Turner on 'Primitive Man in the Medway Valley'. Chatham Historical Society was to promote local history and archaeology, encouraging local schools and archaeological societies to become affiliated members. At this stage the society had 65 members.

During the next year 40 members met at Pembroke Gate for a tour off the Royal Marine Barracks and Chatham Dockyard. On the 29th March 1951 the society arranged a symposium, held at Chatham Town Hall, with six local speakers followed by an exhibition which ran from 31st March-14th April 1951 at Chatham Library. About 200 people attended the symposium, indicating an interest for local history in the community.



MAC: DE 314/5 Chatham Historical Society collection: Flyers for both events

A committee meeting on 30th March 1951 suggested that certain buildings should have a plaque attached e.g. Dickens house in Ordnance Terrace. However nothing seems to have come of this idea. During the early years joint talks were often held with Gillingham & Rainham Historical Society. At the 1952 AGM there were 93 members reported and a grant of £25 received from Chatham Borough council. It would be interesting to know what this was spent on, but it's not recorded. It could possibly have been the society's visit to Owletts and Cobham College in 1952. We revisited many years later in 2017 with a group of about 18 on a beautiful Sunday afternoon in August and enjoyed a guided tour and tea.

Skipping till the end of the decade the 1959 AGM had 26 members present and organised a trip to the Chislehurst Caves. Perhaps we should be more adventurous in the 21st century! In 1961 the Lower Medway Archaeological Society became an associate member and after its recent winding up as a group left half their proceeds to our society. By 1966 only 23 members attended the AGM and there was a concerted effort to look for new members. At the end of the decade in 1969 the AGM was followed by slides, photos and prints. Due to closure of the New Road library the society moved its meetings to the Junior Library at Riverside, Chatham.

NEVER HAD IT SO GOOD?

MEMORIES OF A 1950s LUTON CHILDHOOD

by Brian Joyce

I was born at home in Connaught Road in Luton in 1949 and spent the first ten years of my life there. I hope that some of my memories, both positive and negative, resonate with people of a similar age from the Medway Towns.

I think that my part of Connaught Road was built on a former brickfield in the 1880s. My home was a small three up two down house with an earth floor cellar. I can still hear the rushing sound of coal as the men from the Co-op shot it down the open grating.

We never had a bathroom or inside toilet all the time we lived there. Instead a tin bath and a lavatory “out the back” (and a handy under the bed “po”) served our needs. We had an Ascot heater in the kitchen and an open fire in the living room. I learned my first (mild) swear words from my mother as the newspaper she used to restrict the air to the fire she was lighting ignited. The front room was kept for best: I can hardly remember the need to go in there.

Our entertainment was activated by a switch on the windowsill which turned on a loudspeaker. I think British Relay Wireless was the provider. Because these radio broadcasts were piped, reception was good. This was unlike television, which we first rented in the late 1950s from Matthews in Chatham High Street. I remember TV reception being subject to interference we called “snowstorms” due, I was told to the fact that we were in a steep sided valley. Faulty valves and tubes often interrupted our viewing anyway, and the screen was tiny. However, I still have a rare photo of my father proudly posing in front of the newly installed set.

The garden of our house backed onto an alley which divided those of Connaught and Albany roads. This unpaved boundary along with the

nearby Coney and Daisy Banks comprised a readymade and cost-free adventure playground for my friends and me. I believe the alley is now gated.

The schools I attended were within walking distance, so I was able to scamper home for my dinner. The schools still lie in a line up the slope linking Luton Road with Alexandra Road at the top. When I was there, the Infants were at the bottom, the Boys' Junior in the middle and the Girls' Junior at the Alexandra Road end. A large air raid shelter still lay outside the Girls' gates in the 1950s.

In those days, corporal punishment was widely used. My Year 6 ("Fourth Year") teacher painted the tip of his cane red to resemble blood and jumped in the air when wielding it so as to maximise its impact on the eleven-year old's hand. He would probably end up behind bars today and in my view quite rightly.

This same teacher, once the obsession with the 11+ examinations was over, used to send me on a regular Friday errand. He would dispatch me to Pilcher's coach yard in Beacon Road to cash a cheque for him. I would dutifully cross various roads, walk up the steep hill to Pilcher's and then, clutching the cash in an envelope walk back down to the school. I wonder what would happen today to a teacher who abused his position in this way.

I do have some positive memories of the school though. At one point it ran evening film shows for children and their parents. The ones I can remember are Windbag the Sailor with Will Hay, Vice Versa (Peter Ustinov) and the wonderful Winchester 73 (James Stewart). My life-long obsession with films probably started in Luton Boys' Primary School.

Looking back, Luton was a fairly self-contained community in the 1950s. We didn't have a car and there were no out of town retail parks to visit anyway. Our clothing, shoes, furniture and pharmaceutical needs were met by Co-operative shops on Luton Road. We shopped for food etc at small local shops including Attwood's to where my mother sent her eight-year-old son to buy packets of Five Player's Weights. There was "Nellies" for greengrocery and Eastman's for meat. Chicken, by the way, was a Christmas treat.

All my immediate family lived in the Luton area, and apart from walking to the Library in New Road and the Ritz for Saturday Morning Pictures, I can't remember venturing out of Luton very often. The occasional summer visits to the Strand in Gillingham (my mother told me that the unpleasant fumes from the gasometer did you good) and bus rides to Featherstone's in Rochester for more expensive clothes (on credit) were about as far beyond the Luton Arches that we got.

I don't look back on the 1950s with misty eyed nostalgia. In many (though not all) ways I would rather be a child in 2020. I could have done without the smog which shrouded Luton from time to time and which gave my sister and me bad chests. And measles. And dull 1950s Sundays. And contemporary dentistry. And cold houses, monotonous food and secondary smoking. And from my mother's point of view labour-intensive housework.

In some ways, I wish I could go back to Luton in the 1950s and have a good look round. And then get back in the time machine and come right back here.



Some memories of CHATHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY during the 1980s and 90s

by Jean Lear

I became a member of CHS while I was working at Chatham Library – mainly because I wanted to join an outing they had organised to St James church, Bicknor. I was intrigued by the fact that its walls were made of clunch or chalk blocks and I had never heard of such a thing before. It didn't disappoint – it was enjoyable, instructive and friendly and I was hooked.

At that time George Fordham was Chatham Librarian and I think, Chairman of the society. We met in the Junior Library at no cost and the programme was much as it is now, although of course, the technology was less sophisticated. Many lecturers had slides to illustrate their talks but not all had projectors which moved on to the slide automatically and the speakers usually “employed” a friend, or press-ganged a handy CHS member, to move them when prompted. Sometimes, slides got stuck necessitating a pause while the speaker sorted them out. Bulb failure was another hazard, but the speakers were doughty characters and the show always went on to the end.

After George retired and moved away from Chatham, Ron Foster took over as Chairman and Rod Clark became Secretary, although we continued to meet in the junior library. At almost the same time, Sheila Erwin joined the committee and the society entered a new and more active phase. Civic matters, school “adoptions” and the birth of the Medway Chronicle became hot topics on the Committee's agenda.

When budgets began to shrink and the library service needed to income generate, we had to look for another venue and we moved to St Barbara's church Brompton and some years later to St Barbara's new hall. All the halls had their own atmosphere and idiosyncrasies, and quickly adapted to the quirks and needs of members.

History of Holcombe

by Len Feist

Holcombe and Huntsman's Corner were originally part of the Manor of Horsted. By the nineteenth century the area was part of Kennel Farm as can be seen on the map of 1874.

The manor house at Holcombe was built in 1887 for George Winch, solicitor and brewer. It was built in the style of his wife's ancestral home; Holcombe Court in Devon. Holcombe Manor was a mock Tudor mansion built in red brick with overhanging eaves and half-timber work to the upper floors. It contained entrance and lounge halls, four reception rooms, fourteen bed and dressing rooms, two bathrooms and ample domestic offices.

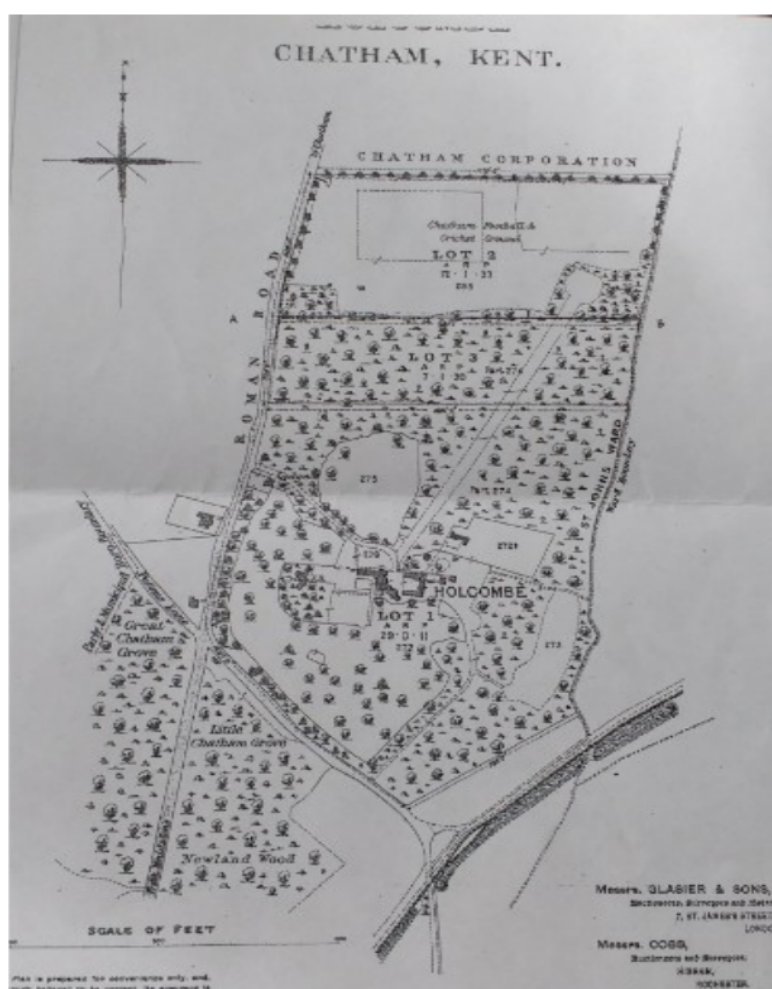
The house was situated in charming gardens and grounds, studded with timber and other trees of mature growth and miniature park and woodlands, occupying twenty eight acres. There was stabling for five horses, a farmer, garage, coachman's cottage and a large carriage entrance.



Holcombe Manor MAC VF Collection CHA 373

In 1920 the council purchased a large chunk of the estate including Holcombe Manor to create a school. The manor house remains in use till this day as part of the school buildings.

About 12 acres were set aside by Chatham council and made into leisure facilities for the town; football and cricket pitches were laid out next to the cemetery. Another 7 acres were purchased by a builder and now comprise Letchworth and Bournville Avenues.



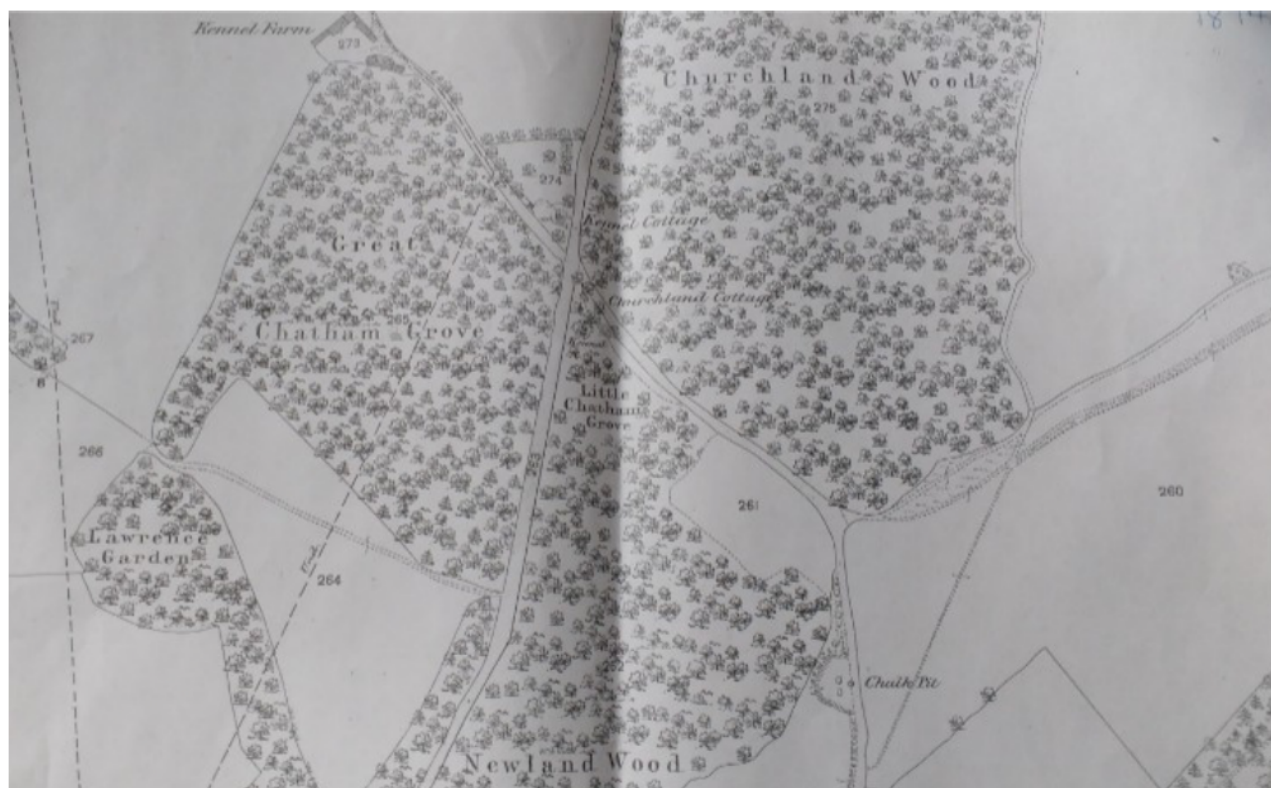
Sales Particulars Messrs Cobb (1920) MAC VF Collection CHA 728

Mary Clarke Bluett of Holcombe Rogers, Devon married George Winch of Chatham on 22nd August 1866 at St Nicholas Church, Brighton. They set up home a 1 Gibraltar Terrace in Chatham and he being a good scholar trained as a solicitor and was articled to Thomas Hills of New Road. In

1864 he became a partner in Hills & Winch and after Hills death it became just Winch.

A well-established family as this could not fail to make an impression on Chatham. His father was the brewer E Winch sited at the bottom of Manor Road and formerly owned by James Best. The family were by now socially well placed and so George Winch purchased land on what was called Roman Road (now Maidstone Road) in Chatham. He built a manor house as described above and named it Holcombe. Edwin Harris and his wife had an invite to explore the house and gardens in all its splendour.

Mary Winch died in 1909 and George remarried, but his second wife found it difficult to live at Holcombe and so they moved to Calvary Park in Tunbridge Wells. The Winch firm of solicitors remains in Chatham to this day. His estate was sold in lots; one lot became Chatham Football Club and bowling green. The new owner of Holcombe Manor and estate, Colonel Hulett, sold the house and grounds to Albert Grant of the Maidstone Distillery.



1874 Ordnance Survey Map of Huntsman's Corner

The surrounding area at the time Winch bought the land was pleasant wood and farm land (see map). Pattens Lane and City Way were also still untouched, but eventually they were too sold off. New developments included Wallace Road where St Stephens Church had its first place of worship in 1934. 'On October 28th Mr Johnson wrote to the people of the new District of Horsted and City Way inviting them to attend the dedication of the new building. He noted that the actual cost of the building was in the region of £2,500 and that some £700 was still outstanding.'



Image from 'The Story So Far' by Rev Dr Philip Hesketh MAC VF CHA
726.5

Finally in 1959 a piece of land was acquired at the junction of Walderslade and Maidstone Road known locally as Huntsman's Corner (because here was the start of the Hunt in former times) and the present St Stephen's Church was built with a large wooden cross on the bell tower that was visible as a landmark for some distance. However this had to be taken down in 2015 due to dry rot amidst safety concerns. It is here that our society has met since December 2017.



Image from 'The Story So Far' by Rev Dr Philip Hesketh MAC VF CHA
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Best porter in the District

(More memories of old Luton)

As you entered Luton High street from Luton Road at the turn of the century, the first building on the left hand side was the Village Infants school. There were three classes, with about thirty children in each class. A lot, you may think, but in those days families were larger. Most ranged from three to six children. The teachers were Miss Valsler (the Head) Miss Williams, Miss Catt and Miss Auxley. Some of us started at four years of age, but most from five to eight.

Across the road from the playground was the entrance to the depot for the Chatham and District Light Railway (the trams). There was a tall hawthorn hedge from school up to within a few feet of the Luton Tavern. Beyond the hedge was a field named Chick field. This was at the time a hop garden - the hop kilns were still there. In 1919 the hedge was removed and a terrace of six houses were built where it stood. Some years later four more were added and after the Second World War the council bought the rest of the field and had sixteen old people's bungalows built. At that time the Luton Tavern was just a beer house. It was said it sold the best porter in the district. Porter was dark brown malt liquor which is supposed to have got its name as a favourite drink of London market porters. It was certainly a favourite tippie of the ladies and a local doctor recommended it for pregnant women. Often you would see two or three ladies sitting in the jug (where beer was served to take home in a jug or bottle) shelling peas or stringing beans for the family meal while sipping half a pint or two of the noted porter.

The first shop in Luton sold general goods. The owners were Mr and Mrs Ruby. Mr Ruby worked for Dove, Phillips and Pett, a mineral water firm in Rochester. He delivered the drink to shops and public houses around the towns by horse and van. Mr Ruby's father opened the shop at 5.30 in the morning to serve the dockyard workers, the brickfield men and farm labourers with tobacco cigarettes and snuff. He had a little pair of scales

which he used to hold up by the centre pin. The men mostly bought harsh tobacco which they could either smoke or chew.

Mrs Ruby's father was Jimmy Wallace. He was barely five feet tall and the Luton people called him Jimmy 'Long' Wallace. Rumour had it that he had got fed up with life at one time. He had taken a rope, gone to the bottom of his garden to a stable and stood on a box. He put one end of the rope around a beam and the other end round his neck and jumped off the box. But the rope was too long, so all he did was sprain his ankle. Whether this was true or not I don't know - they made up a lot of things in those days, but I loved to hear the stories. They had no education but good imagination and they loved to best one another with a tale.

The next shop was the baker's run by Mrs Skinner. She had two men baking from 3 pm to 6 am. Her two sons delivered the bread in two vans drawn by horses called Spencer and Walter. At hop picking time Mrs Skinner and her daughter would be up at daybreak to sell bread to the hop pickers on their fields.

Next was the grocer's. There were no packet goods as there are today, everything was weighed up while you waited. All the goods were on his side of the counter, sides of bacon hung from the ceiling and butter and lard was on a marble slab. He blended his own tea, which was kept in canisters on the shelves. His sons rode their bicycles, went round for orders on Tuesdays and delivered on Fridays. Their names were Arthur and Herbert.

Next was a saddler. He was a very lucky man as the only other one in the towns was a Mr Johnson at Rochester. There were a lot of horses on the farms and in the towns themselves. I have seen the light still on in his shop at nine o'clock at night. I often sat in by his bench having a chat. The last shop on that side was a boot and repairer, a Mr Clout. He loved a pint and often crossed the road to the Hen and Chickens for a quick one during opening hours.

We now cross the bottom of Beacon Hill to the Hen and Chickens, the other public house. Over the years this has been a coaching inn. My mother told us she used to ride to town from therein a wagonette with a pair of horses. They ran backwards and forwards to The Angel at Strood twice a day. In those days the pubs had their day outings throughout the summer. The Hen and Chickens had a four-in-hand and wagonettes which they used and customers paid into a club for their days out. They took lots of ale and food for the home journey when the pubs were shut. As they never passed a tavern without stopping, you can be sure they didn't travel far.

Next to the Hen and Chickens was an alley leading to a little cottage where the ice cream man, his sister and two sons lived. His name was Jumbo Bates and his sister was called Helvinie. There were only two bedrooms, so Jumbo slept with the boys. He was a very small man with a pigeon chest. To get at the ice cream he had to stand on the hub of his cart wheel.

The next shop sold everything that babies needed. Next to that was the greengrocer, Mr Ballard, who also had a coal round. His wife was my cousin. Their daughter Win is still with us. She is a Mrs Parker and, like me, still lives in Luton.

The last shop on this side of the road was the butchers. Mr and Mrs Thomas Collins kept this little wooden-fronted shop with shutters on the front at night. Their sausages were the best in town. Thomas Collins was a pal of my father and the pair never missed a night in the Hen and Chickens, but only from seven to eight thirty, when they both had to report home.

Now we come to the little square in a big square. It was just three houses with a green in front. It was called Crittenden's Square, after my great grandfather James Crittenden who moved to Luton from Lidsing, near

Bredhurst, in 1830. His son William lived in one of these houses for many years. He was a quaint old chap, married twice and changed his way of worship three times - from Methodist to Baptist to Salvation Army.

Next was another old house, then the blacksmith's forge and the wheelwright. Behind these was a farmyard with hop kilns and stables. That was the end of Luton Square on the left hand side. So we cross the road to Pheasant House where my grandfather lived. Before my time it was Upper Pheasant farm and its fields were Wayfield Estate is today. Next to the house was another little square with three cottages like the other one. It was called Donkey's Square and was part of Pheasant Farm.

Next was a very old house called Limes. It had a wrought iron porch with a front door bell you pulled by an iron bar. You could hear it all over the house. There was also an inglenook fireplace where you could sit round three sides. A Mr Tingley lived here. He was an artist and art master at Rochester Tech. His son Alfred was a great friend of mine as we both started at the Mathematical school at eleven years of age.

Next was a dairy. The owner, Mr Selves, had about twenty cows which he drove around Capstone Road to Rectory Meadow after milking night and morning. Next were a few old houses with weather-board fronts. Then there was the last shop, now the post office. An old farm house faced the Hen and Chickens. Last came a high wall, reaching down to the light railway depot. That was Luton Square around 1910.

Luton Gazette 7 June 1993

The last 20 years - Royal Engineers to the rescue

by Barry Meade

For many years the Chatham Historical Society held their monthly meeting on a Thursday evening at the Library at Riverside, Chatham. The space created amongst the shelves of book was adequate but could not be called convivial.

Subsequent to the re-development of this area, in 2003 the Society was given notice that the Library was to close and it became necessary for the Committee to find an alternative venue for their monthly meetings. After an extensive search the Hall associated with the Royal Engineers Garrison Church of St. Barbara in Brompton was found. Although not actually in Chatham, historically it could be argued that it used to be within the Borough.

Arrangements were made with the appropriate department of the R. E to hire the Hall, it being available on the usual evening for the Societies meetings.

On 8th April 2004 the 54th. AGM of the Society was held at the new hall and this corresponded with Roy Murrant, our Chairman of many years, standing down and the election of our new Chairman, George Bristow.

The first monthly meeting of the Society was on 8th. May when 36 members attended from a total membership of 55. The first thing the members noted was the adjacent kitchen facilities, something lacking at the Library, and which meant that a cup of tea and a biscuit could now be a regular feature at our meetings.

The venue proved quite popular with a friendly atmosphere and was not too big. However with no bus route being accessible and not many of our members living in the near vicinity, travel by car was the only option and although our meetings were reasonably well attended, our total

membership started to decline.

For some years our venue was secure but in 2012 a problem arose. Being a building owned by the M O D the Hall maintenance was being privatised and it was not considered viable for future Army use, its age and condition not being commensurate with the requirements of the new contractors.

However a new building was to be constructed for the use of Army personnel and their families and the Society was offered use of the new facility at the same rent. But there was a sting in the tail.

The Society would be required to pay for an annual licence and there would be an additional charge for the Hall to be locked and unlocked for our monthly meetings. The Committee considered all the options and it was decided that the new hall, the Lampard Centre, was the only viable venue to continue our meetings, at least for the foreseeable future.

In 2013 the new Lampard Centre became our new venue. It was close to the old hall in Brompton and parking was ample, but still not near a bus route. It was very spacious and also had kitchen facilities although not as convenient as at the old hall. Possibly because of its spaciousness it never seemed as convivial as the old hall.

The requirement for Army personnel to always unlock and lock up the premises before and after our meetings became an issue, so much so that the Centre was not unlocked for our 2016 AGM. It was held at very short notice at the hall of St. Nicholas Church Strood and at this meeting, Barry Meade stood down as Chairman and Len Feist was elected as new Chairman.

The Committee decided that the time was right to look for a new venue for the Society's meetings. The use of the Army's halls at Brompton had been appropriate and helpful at the time but a move to a more residential area and within Chatham would be sought.

And the Return to Chatham

by Barry Meade

Again after much searching our chairman Len Feist was able to negotiate favourable terms for the hire of the Church Hall of St. Stephen's Church in Maidstone Rd, Chatham. Our first meeting was in December 2017 but now on the second Wednesday every month, not the traditional Thursday. It has proved to be a good move, it is a pleasant hall and being in a residential area our membership is picking up and we look forward to St. Stephen's Hall being our 'home' for many years to come.

Medway's UK 2025 City of Culture bid – making history and reflecting Medway's past

by Imogen Robertson, Medway City of Culture Bid Director

The 2025 UK City of Culture competition

Medway has announced its intention to follow Derry : Londonderry, Hull and Coventry as the UK's fourth (and the South of the England's first) City of Culture in 2025.

The competition which is open to large towns and other areas with urban centres as well as cities, is run by central government and is designed to re-position places through creativity, art and culture. Winning would spotlight Medway's unique heritage and identity on a local and national scale for an audience wider than ever before. The title will bring major social and economic benefits to the area for local people, opening up opportunities for everyone to get involved in culture and creativity, improving well-being and community cohesion and reducing social isolation. Winning would increase tourism and jobs, promote opportunities for people of all ages and create a sense of local pride.

Around half of the funding is expected to come from national sources such as the Arts Council and the National Lottery Heritage Fund with the other half sourced locally with significant business sponsorship and inward investment.

Medway's turn, our 2025 bid

Winning is the start of something rather than an end point and the title has had a transformative effect on previous hosts. Hull engaged a whopping 95% of its entire population in its City of Culture programme and we hope to achieve something just as significant for Medway. Medway's year-long programme will see us host national cultural events and engage local, national and international creatives to make work that takes inspiration

from the stories, heritage and contemporary identity of Medway. The programme will span multiple art forms, from traditional performing and visual arts and heritage activities to digital culture (video games and immersive technologies) and everyday creativity (such as cooking and craft).

We will offer free experiences across Medway's five towns and rural communities on a range of scales from mass participatory outdoor events for thousands of people, to work for intimate audiences of a few people. The programme will use our streets, green spaces, river, shopping centres, sports stadiums, schools and universities, theatres, heritage buildings and galleries as venues, inviting everyone living and working in Medway and visiting from further afield to join in.

The bid is supported by key local stakeholders including the local universities, businesses, Mid Kent College, Chatham Historic Dockyard and Medway Council. Following my appointment as Bid Director (a local lass from Rochester), the bid is in the process of setting up an independent board of Trustees drawing together expertise and enthusiasm from across different sectors in Medway. The board will run an independent culture trust and guide the campaign over the next two years of the bidding process from 2020 to 2021.

Get involved: on the hunt for local stories and support!

The bid is a coming together of people and organisations across Medway with an enthusiasm for its heritage and future. Local support and ideas are key to success in the competition and we hope to reach as many people as possible over the next 18 months. We would love your help to spread the word. We will shortly be launching social media channels and a website, do visit, share and show your support.

The themes of the bid will be developed over the two years of the bidding process through engagement with local people across the area and we are particularly eager to ensure that the voices of young people are heard in the development of the project. We're keen to crowdsource inspiration and stories that have shaped Medway and are inviting everyone to help.

Branching out beyond what might be found within the pages of a history book or on Wikipedia, we want to explore people's local memories and insights for the quirkier side of our local identity. Please get in touch with the hidden histories and unique folklore, traditions, local legends, memorable rumours or one-of-a-kind people (ancient or modern) that have shaped Medway's identity and made Medway what it is today.

We'd love to hear from you, please do get in touch.

By email: cityofculture@medway2025.co.uk

By post: Imogen Robertson, Medway City of Culture bid, Room 303, University of Kent, Clocktower Building, Chatham Historic Dockyard, ME4 4TZ